

The Impact of Code-Switching in Zimbabwe: The Case of IsiNdebele and Chishona in Lower Gweru



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ABSTRACT

This paper sought to examine the impact of code-switching in the Lower Gweru community of Midlands Religion in Zimbabwe where IsiNdebele and ChiShona co-exist as first and third languages respectively. The main thrust of the paper was to establish the impact of code-switching involving IsiNdebele and ChiShona in bilingual and multilingual situations such as schools and communities. This study used a qualitative research approach and focused on two intentionally selected primary schools and two secondary schools as representatives of the whole population in the community. Since the selection of participants was purposively done, the sample had twenty participants. Key instruments used in the collection of data included Interviews, Observations and Document Analysis because of their relationship with the qualitative approach characterised by the use of words in explaining phenomena as they obtain in their natural settings. Collected data was presented and analysed depending on the nature of the gathered responses. Findings from this research revealed that code-switching is an indispensable issue in bilingual communities. Hence, it has both positive and negative impacts on learning in the target language. In conclusion, the study categorically established that the impact of code-switching is inevitable in bilingualism and diversified communities. The study recommends that educators and teachers be equipped with basic strategic skills of handling code-switching in bilingual and multilingual classrooms. The research adds knowledge in the sphere of education in multilingualism and multiculturalism, through examining the impact of code-switching involving indigenous languages on their own.

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INTRODUCTION

The research seeks to explore the impact of code-switching involving IsiNdebele and ChiShona in the teaching and learning and use of IsiNdebele in bilingual and/or multilingual communities. Of importance to note from the onset is that these languages co-exist or are languages in contact in Lower Gweru where IsiNdebele and ChiShona are indigenous languages whereas English is taught as a foreign language. Their co-existence regardless of their statuses and stratum results in code-switching which is unavoidable. Therefore, the exposure of learners to their mother tongue at primary level from Grade One to Seven, as stipulated in the Education Act of 1987 (Revised in 2006) yields code-switching which in turn impacts positively and negatively on the teaching and learning processes. Subsequently, code-switching is later realised in community discourses and conversations as the situation prevails in the Lower Gweru community and its schools.

Since code-switching involves languages in contact, it is prudent at this stage to briefly reflect on the linguistic situation of Zimbabwe as the basis of this ongoing study. The linguistic situation in this country is that there are sixteen spoken languages namely English, IsiNdebele, Shona, Shangani, Venda, Kalanga, Nambya, Tonga, Chichewa, Sotho, Sena, Tshwawo, Barwe, Hwesa, Xhosa and Ndau. In concurrence, regarding the language scenario in the country, Hachipola states that, currently, the linguistic reflection in the country is that Zimbabwe is a multilingual country with sixteen spoken languages.¹ However, prior to the adoption of the Zimbabwean Constitution of 2013, Shona and Ndebele were rendered as national languages taught in the education system while English was the official language. Despite being treated as national languages learnt in schools, IsiNdebele and ChiShona enjoyed the national language statuses in their separate areas of domination and location. In other words, IsiNdebele and ChiShona previously prevailed in different geographical areas of Matabeleland and Mashonaland regions respectively. However, due to modernisation, migrations, intermarriages, sharing of boundaries and intermingling in urban areas these languages have become languages in contact. While the influence of the two languages on each other is inevitable, the problem is the negative impact of code-switching on the teaching and learning of IsiNdebele. Thus, the teaching and learning of IsiNdebele has become practically impossible without code-switching due to the unbearable ChiShona influence in Lower Gweru Communities and its schools. In this regard, the argument hinges on the issue of code-switching which stifles the smooth teaching of IsiNdebele as a subject in IsiNdebele language undisturbed by ChiShona influence. The confusion emanating from code-switching ultimately affects the performance of learners in their national examinations which is a cause for concern in Lower Gweru locality where the study was conducted.

The main intention of the research is to examine the impact of code-switching in the learning of Ndebele as the first language in multilingual communities like Lower Gweru where Ndebele and Shona co-exist as languages in contact. The study also identifies the positive and negative impacts of code-switching in schools and the community where IsiNdebele is the dominant language and ChiShona is the second indigenous language spoken in Lower Gweru in Gweru District. Consequently, the exposure of the negatives will then lead to suggestions and recommendations on how best they should be eliminated as they affect the learning of the intended variety. The positives will be enhanced since they help in the grasping and consolidating taught concepts.

This segment basically hinges on the significance of the research by expressing its uniqueness in language education. The paper is unique in that it adds knowledge in the sphere of education in multilingualism, particularly in teaching and learning through examining the impact of code-switching involving indigenous varieties on their own, while all along the norm has been researching mainly on code-switching concerning mother or first language and foreign or second languages. In this regard, the uniqueness is in that both IsiNdebele and ChiShona are indigenous languages and mother tongues respectively, yet while in contact they exert influence upon each which unconsciously has yielded inherent code-switching. Therefore, the paper through the exploration of the impact of code-switching endeavours to reveal and discuss how best its negative effects can be tackled and minimised as they affect and compromise the development of IsiNdebele and its effective teaching and learning.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study attempted to review literature written by scholars on issues to do with the impact of code-switching in multilingual and bi-lingual societies such as those like Lower Gweru. Research has been extensively conducted in the sphere of code-switching and its effects in multilingual situations. In the current study, ChiShona another indigenous language is involved in code-switching during the learning of Ndebele which is taught as the national language in the communities where it is dominant. When highlighting the significance of a language, Goduka posits that language is inseparably linked to culture as it is a basic means by which people articulate their cultural values and the perception through which they perceive the world.² In concurrence, Ndlovu asserts that, “Language is one of the most important

¹ Simooya Jerome Hachipola, “A Survey of the Minority Languages of Zimbabwe,” (*No Title*), 1998.

² I N Goduka, “Linguistic and Cultural Diversity Implications for Learning, Educating and Curricular Transformation,” *South African Journal of Higher Education* 12, no. 1 (1998).

aspects of an educational system.³ It is a unique human attribute that enables people to learn, think creatively and change socially.” Implicit from these citations is that language is a critical and indispensable tool as it is a means of expressing cultural values, initiating thinking and as well as influencing change in life. In this respect, the IsiNdebele language is a people’s assertion that should be cherished and developed through teaching and learning. However, the problem is the inherent code-switching which directly hinders effective teaching and learning of IsiNdebele due to rampant ChiShona influence in the process. Consequently, this inherent code-switching continues to affect the performance of learners in IsiNdebele since ChiShona influences written work due to code-switching which is penalised.

Code-Switching

It is the most critical concept in the current study. Myers-Scotton in Alenezi explains code-switching as “the use of two language varieties in the same conversation.”⁴ In a related definition, Jamshidi and Mahdieh define it as the alternation of two languages in a single conversation, sentence and discourse.⁵ Another definition is by Azlan and Narasuman who assert that code-switching is usually a change that occurs between more than two languages concurrently, in the same discussion.⁶ According to Bokamba, code-switching is the mixing of concepts, phrases and constituencies from two vivid grammatical systems across boundaries in the same speech event.⁷ Traditionally, the concept has been viewed as a strategy used to compensate for a deficiency in language proficiency and indicating an inability to retrieve a word or phrase of the target language, thereby substituting it with the word or phrase of the first language.⁸ Implicit from the cited definitions is that code-switching involves the alternation of two language varieties in the same discourse. Paramount to note in these definitions is that the switching of languages prevails within the same communication or text situation demands due to inadequacy in handling the target language. Deduced from the definitions is that code-switching is critical in that it allows the continuation of the conversation in the event of inadequacies in dealing with the target language. While code-switching is considered generally progressive in the field of education, it isn’t appreciated in this study involving IsiNdebele and ChiShona because it stifles the development of IsiNdebele per se in the teaching-learning processes. Furthermore, ChiShona interference in oral conversation is discouraged and penalised in academic exercises, tests and national examinations.

First Language

The concept is the first language which the child gets from birth before acquiring other languages. According to Sinhai et al. in Derakhshan and Karim, initially, the language had diverse names such as mother tongue, native language and basic language.⁹ In concurrence, Ndamba perceives it as, “the language which the child first, acquires.”¹⁰ First language, therefore, is extensively viewed as a language that a child learns first from her/his mother. Thus, the first language which is also accepted as the mother tongue further serves as the basis for one's thinking, reasoning, discussing and analysing issues. In this research, the concept of first language refers to Ndebele the language of the inhabitants of the Lower Gweru community in Midlands Province in Zimbabwe.

³ Sabelo J Ndlovu-Gatsheni, *Coloniality of Power in Postcolonial Africa* (African Books Collective, 2013), 13.

⁴ Abdullah A Alenezi, “Students’ language Attitude Towards Using Code-Switching As A Medium Of Instruction In The College Of Health Sciences: An Exploratory Study,” *Annual Review of Education, Communication & Language Sciences* 7 (2010), 3.

⁵ A. Jamshidi and N. Mahdieh, “Learners’ Use of Code-Switching in the English as a Foreign Language Classroom,” *Australian Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences* 7, no. 1 (2013): 186–90.

⁶ Nik Mastura Nik Ismail Azlan and Suthagar Narasuman, “The Role of Code-Switching as a Communicative Tool in an ESL Teacher Education Classroom,” *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences* 90 (2013): 458–67.

⁷ Eyamba G Bokamba, “Are There Syntactic Constraints on Code-mixing?,” *World Englishes* 8, no. 3 (1989): 277–92.

⁸ A. Rabiati and S. Aspalila, “Interference of First Language in the Teaching and Learning English as a Second Language,” *International E-Journal for Research in ELT* 4, no. 3 (2018): 31–43.

⁹ Ali Derakhshan and Elham Karimi, “The Interference of First Language and Second Language Acquisition,” *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 5, no. 10 (2015): 2112.

¹⁰ Gamuchirai Tsitsi Ndamba, “A Critical Review of Policy on Language-in-Education for Africa: A Case of Zimbabwe,” 2013, 25.

Second Language

The second language is defined by Nutsukpo as the language learnt after the mother tongue or first language(s) has been learnt.¹¹ Another definition is by David who elucidates it as a non-native language that is widely employed for communication, generally as a medium of institutions of education, government and business.¹² However, the scenario is different in this particular study as the second one is an indigenous language namely Shona while English is regarded as the target language. Hence, it is English which has a higher status as it is widely used for communication and as the medium of Education, government and business. In fact, a second language refers to an additional language learnt after the mother tongue. In other words, it is the language that is learnt in addition to the first language regardless of whether is indigenous or foreign. In this study, IsiNdebele is the first language learnt as a subject in the Midlands in parts where it is recognised as the national language ahead of ChiShona which is regarded as the third language after Ndebele and English respectively. Interestingly, despite being the third language in the area, it is more used than English in code-switching, yet it is not accommodated in the curriculum in this part of the province.

Bilingualism

The significance of bilingualism cannot be overstated since people converse in numerous languages other than their mother tongue. Harmers and Blanc (2000), argue that somebody is bilingual if they can communicate in two linguistic codes. In the same vein, Butler and Hakuta perceive bilinguals as persons who can effectively and fluently speak a second language as their mother tongue.¹³ In this context, the concept of bilingualism refers to a person's capability to use two dialects alternatively switching from one another confidently. In this study, Ndebele and Shona were considered as languages spoken in Lower Gweru, especially by bilingual learners whose first language is Shona but who learn IsiNdebele as a subject at primary and secondary schools. Besides being taught as a subject, IsiNdebele is the first indigenous language in the locality. In this regard, these learners automatically become bilinguals because Ndebele and Shona co-exist as languages in contact in Lower Gweru where they are used for different purposes in a bilingual environment. Unfortunately in their use for different reasons, they are characterised by rampant code-switching which impacts negatively and positively on the learning of IsiNdebele as a subject.

Borrowing

This is a critical aspect employed experience in the process of code-switching. The concept of borrowing, which is also known as borrowing of terms, refers to how a word from one language is changed for use by another language variety. Borrowing can be direct or indirect. According to Akmajian et al., direct borrowing involves one language aggressively borrowing words from other languages while indirect occurs when an expression in one language is translated.¹⁴ Word-borrowing is unavoidable when cultures and languages are in contact. Since language should not be static but dynamic in order for it to survive, it is not possible to avoid it even in Lower Gweru where IsiNdebele and ChiShona now correlate and co-exist due to ever increasing ChiShona speaking people in the communities. This observation, however, contradicts the objective of this paper which is against code-switching as it also incorporates borrowed words into the teaching and learning of IsiNdebele in lessons. Therefore, this study reveals and discusses the impact of code-switching which affects the effective teaching and learning of IsiNdebele since borrowed terms are not accepted but penalised as a not standard language in written work and national examinations.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was mainly informed and guided by the postmodern theory because it was considered the most relevant to this study, which examines the impact of code-switching involving Ndebele and Shona in

¹¹ A. Nutsukpo, *Phonetic, Phonology & Spoken English* (Port Harcourt: Emhai Printing & Publishing, 1996).

¹² C. David, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of English Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1995).

¹³ Y. G. Butler and K. Hakuta, *Bilingualism and Second Language Acquisition- The Handbook of Bilingualism* (London: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2006).

¹⁴ A. Akmajian et al., *Linguistics: An Introduction to Language and Communication* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2010).

Lower Gweru communities where the two languages co-exist. Postmodernism theoretical framework is crucial in this study of code-switching in the teaching and learning processes. Postmodernism/Postmodernist is associated with an awareness of societal and cultural transitions after World War II and the rise of mass-mediated consumerist popular culture in the 1960s-1970s (Irvine 2018). Implied in this citation is that the postmodern theory involves cultural changes that occurred after World War II thereby giving birth to the new and popular culture. In this regard, postmodernism provides an appropriate theoretical framework for cultural and linguistic changes in society that relates well to the current study. In concurrence, Muchenje, Goringa and Bondai reveal that many countries in Africa are punctuated with linguistic differences which make them multilingual nations.¹⁵ In this context, this theory is relevant to this study which focuses on code-switching as a feature of linguistic diversity mainly occurring in multilingual societies. Hence, this study cannot downplay postmodern theory since Lower Gweru is a bilingual locality where code-switching mainly involving IsiNdebele and ChiShona somehow impacts positively and negatively on the learning of Ndebele in primary and secondary schools.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The researcher chose the qualitative research design as it was relevant to this study which was characterised by the use of descriptive data such as opinions, beliefs and thoughts obtained from face-to-face interaction in words. Interviews, observations and documentary analysis techniques were employed to acquire reliable and valid information about the impact of code-switching involving Ndebele and Shona. In analysing data which was thematically presented, all issues were described, analysed and discussed through the use of words as the study employed the qualitative research design.

Sampling and Sampling Procedures

In this paper, purposeful sampling was employed to choose appropriate and suitable research participants. According to McMillan and Schumacher, in purposeful sampling, the researcher sometimes selects particular features from the population informative about the topic of interest, because of the researcher's knowledge about the population.¹⁶ Thus, the researcher deliberately chose who to include individuals in the research based on their potential to supply necessary data. In this study, the sample was made up of twenty participants who comprised eight primary teachers and four IsiNdebele secondary teachers. Among the community citizens were one School Development Committee member, one peasant farmer, one local church pastor, one Agricultural Extension Officer one Headman and one Councillor. Having a sample of individuals of different occupations and statuses was meant to harness authentic, valid and reliable data. Lesson observations involved a Form One class of thirty-five learners made up of twenty girls and fifteen boys.

Data Analysis

The aim of the section is data presentation, analysis and discussion of the collected data. The presented and analysed data was gathered through qualitative instruments which included interviews, observations and document analysis. The target population comprised a total of twenty participants chosen through purposeful sampling. A sampling of this nature assisted in obtaining needed data regarding the impact of code-switching involving IsiNdebele and ChiShona in Lower Gweru communities where these languages are in contact. Participants were, however, exposed to similar questions meant to collect authentic, valid and reliable data from people in different categories and portfolios within the communities.

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study sampled twenty participants consisting of teachers and community stakeholders. Among the participants, eleven were females while the remainder of nine were males whom the researcher felt were appropriate and relevant as they were purposively sampled for the study. However, the issue of sex

¹⁵ Francis Muchenje, Pedzisai Goringa, and Beatrice Bondai, "Zimbabwe's Language Policy in Education and The 'silenced Voices': A Case Study of Nyanja/Chewa Speaking Pupils from Porta and Kintyre Primary Schools in Zvimba, Zimbabwe," *Academic Research International* 4, no. 2 (2013): 500.

¹⁶ James H McMillan and Sally Schumacher, *Research in Education: Evidence-Based Inquiry* (pearson, 2010).

distribution wasn't an issue but what was critical was the relevance of respondents in the provision of desired data. The researcher felt it was necessary to establish if the participants were bilingual or not since code-switching is associated with bilingualism. Established during the interviews was that the majority of the respondents were bilinguals which made them appropriate for the study on the impact of code-switching in the Lower Gweru community and its schools. Those who were not complete bilinguals somehow understood ChiShona but weren't conversant in the language. Their state, however, didn't stop them from code-switching, especially when talking to ChiShona speakers like nurses, agricultural extension workers, police officers and teachers employed in the community. While code-switching is necessary for such situations, all respondents agreed that it was a disadvantage to learners at school who should learn and be taught in proper IsiNdebele which isn't diluted in the process of preparing for national examinations where ChiShona influence isn't accepted but penalised. Hence, learners' poor performance and resulted in IsiNdebele as a subject which respondents felt was partly caused by unnecessary code-switching during learning.

Pertaining to the issue of code-switching being experienced in IsiNdebele lessons, teachers, learners and community parents unanimously acknowledged that it prevails in the learning of IsiNdebele in schools. Deduced from this unanimous response was that code-switching is inevitable when two languages are in contact. In this regard, teachers and learners unconsciously and spontaneously shift from IsiNdebele to ChiShona or the other way around during IsiNdebele lessons in Lower Gweru schools. From this inevitability of code-switching in the learning of IsiNdebele, learners' competence and confidence in dealing with IsiNdebele linguistic issues are not only compromised but ultimately yield poor performance in national examinations. Although code-switching generally contributes to the development of languages as they are dynamic, it should not be accepted in schools where IsiNdebele is taught and learned as a subject since it affects the learning of standard IsiNdebele as prescribed in the syllabus.

The study also revealed that the respondents were not happy about the negative effects brought about by code-switching in the teaching and learning of IsiNdebele in schools and conversations in the community. To participants, positive effects were not an issue because they hinge on the expansion of the language and its development in accordance with changing times as languages aren't static but dynamic. Hence, the respondents felt the negative effects should be magnified. The outstanding effects forwarded included dilution and corruption of the language, poor language expression, inherent and intermittent interference and poor performance in national examinations. The presented effects certainly affirm the negative effects of code-switching which also have a bearing on the learning of IsiNdebele as a subject. The unavoidable mixing up of IsiNdebele and ChiShona in oral communications and written discourses yields confusion and poor language expression which directly or indirectly stifles and affects the standard IsiNdebele prescribed in the syllabus. Given the cited negative effects, code-switching should not be totally embraced in the learning of the IsiNdebele language because it compromises professional teaching and learning of the target language.

Findings from interviews, observations and written work also revealed common terms that were said to be frequently featured in code-switching during lessons and community conversations. Further said was that those terms have been overused to the extent that learners and young people have accepted them as part of IsiNdebele vocabulary while in reality they are borrowed words. The unfortunate part according to the adults in the community is that they seem to be unconsciously substituting IsiNdebele existing terms. While this is positive in that IsiNdebele language develops and expands, at the same time it is a negative aspect because the incorporated words aren't standardised as they are from another language. Deduced from this scenario is that learners are victims as they are overwhelmed by code-switching which is inevitable in the given circumstances while at the same time IsiNdebele syllabus expects them to be equipped with proper and appropriate language in the national syllabus. Examples of some of the words referred to in the interviews with the respondents are presented below:

ChiShona (sekuru); IsiNdebele (umalume); English (maternal uncle); Phonologised (usekuru)
ChiShona (nhopi); IsiNdebele (isijeza); English (pumpkin porridge); Phonologised (inopi)
ChiShona (kwanisa); IsiNdebele (ukwenelisa); English (to be able); phonologised (ukukwanisa)
ChiShona (mainini); IsiNdebele (umamomncane); English (aunt); phonologised (umainini)
ChiShona (munyayi); IsiNdebele (umkhongi); English; (marriage intermedicator) Phonologised (umnyayi)

The research confirmed that original IsiNdebele concepts have been abandoned in favour of ChiShona terms because of its influence in the community, yet it is not the dominant language. The phonologised ChiShona concepts have adopted the structure of IsiNdebele characterised by initial vowels to fit in its vocabulary. However, what is critical despite their phonologisation, they aren't standard IsiNdebele language which makes them not accepted and thereby penalised in written exercises, tests and examinations. Therefore, code-switching should be discouraged in schools since it results in poor results in the subject yet it should be the opposite since IsiNdebele is the mother tongue of the majority of learners.

Teachers' Code-switching

Noted from the observed lessons was that the Teachers' rate of code-switching had been fairly moderate. Thus, the teacher encouraged ChiShona learners to alternate for purposes of emphasis. In this context, code-switching that occurred indicated that it was meant to encourage participation among ChiShona learners in IsiNdebele lessons which are taught on the basis of being the dominant language in Lower Gweru communities. This confirms Jacobson's findings that code-switching prevails when it is critical to do so and in this respect, there was a positive impact with regard to code-switching.¹⁷ However, the rate of code-switching fluctuated depending on the challenges that occurred during IsiNdebele lessons or discourses. For instance, difficult IsiNdebele words such as 'umkhongi for munyayi in ChiShona,' 'ukangaziwe for mbonano in ChiShona' and 'ubabakazi for vatete in ChiShona' could not be successfully taught without code-switching. Indirectly, code-switching had a positive impact as it consolidated taught concepts. Apparent in the cited examples is that IsiNdebele terms are pre-fixed with initial vowels which is not the case with ChiShona language. Of significance to note was that though the frequency of alternation was moderate, it did not disrupt the flow of the lesson but was for the benefit of all learners due to its positive impact in the teaching-learning and conversation settings.

Learners' Code-switching

From the lesson observations, learners' rate of code-switching was regular and would have been increased if it was not controlled by the Teacher. On average, the teacher permitted the students to freely code-switch during the lesson undisrupted. However, some of the ChiShona speaking learners got carried away and ended up using their language continuously at the expense of IsiNdebele which was used as the medium of instruction for the subject. As a result, the teacher had to interrupt the discussions and remind the learners that ChiShona could only be used to illustrate and clarify concepts when necessary to do so but not always. Deduced from the regular learners' frequency of code-switching, is that it should not only be tolerated but encouraged as it is an effective teaching tactic in dealing with below-average learners in bilingual or multilingual classrooms and areas. Hence, code-switching impacts positively in the learning of Ndebele in a bilingual Lower Gweru community.

Perception of code-switching in community conversations and Ndebele lessons

The research found that the teachers, community farmers, headmen, councillors, and pastors who participated in the study in their spheres of influence code-switched from IsiNdebele to ChiShona due several reasons. The interviews comprised a total of twenty participants who were purposefully sampled. The researcher appreciated this way of sampling as he felt it would help in gathering expected data regarding code-switching from IsiNdebele to the ChiShona language which is in contact with the language of the community. About the language scenario in the Lower Gweru area, the majority highlighted that it is crucial to retain IsiNdebele as their first language and use ChiShona only if it is necessary to do so. In concurrence, the views of the teachers in code-switching articulated that the major reason was to enhance learners' understanding of concepts. On the other hand, very few participants were bitter and felt ChiShona was slowly replacing IsiNdebele in its own locality. Thus, they objected substantiating that using it terribly compromised IsiNdebele which is the dominant language officially taught and learnt in Lower Gweru community schools. However, from a linguistic perspective, the view that the use of ChiShona ought to be totally avoided is an oversight in a setting where languages are regularly in contact. Instead, IsiNdebele

¹⁷ R Jacobson, "Allocating Two Languages as a Key Features of a Bilingual Methodology. Clevedon," *Multilingual Matters*, 1990.

vocabulary grows and expands through borrowing, coining and phonologising processes which are unavoidable as IsiNdebele and ChiShona co-exist in the Lower Gweru community.

Impact of Code-switching in Multilingual Communities

The research revealed that code-switching is unavoidable in multilingual communities and yields both positive and negative impacts. In other words, issues to do with the impact of code-switching are characterised by positives and negatives. Some of those issues that impact positively include the following:

- promotion of bilingualism among learners due to languages in contact;
- expansion of language vocabulary through phonologising, borrowing and adoption of words;
- enhancement and/or understanding of taught IsiNdebele concepts;
- influencing of cultural-linguistic relationship between IsiNdebele and ChiShona.

On the other hand, the study further revealed issues pertaining to the negative impact of code-switching as the following:

- inherent and intermittent shifting in the conversation;
- compromised proficiency in both Ndebele and Shona languages;
- poor expressions and lack of vividness due to alternation;
- corruption of the affected language.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings made in this study in relation to the impact of code-switching involving IsiNdebele and ChiShona, it is unavoidable to put forward recommendations. Therefore, the following recommendations are presented:

- The Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education Science and Technology should embark on In-service and Staff-Development programmes to equip educators and teachers with basic skills in using code-switching strategies in bilingual classrooms.
- The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education should ensure that educators and teachers enhance the positive aspects of code-switching as they help in grasping and consolidating taught concepts of the target language in bilingual classrooms.
- Educators and teachers should ensure that reflected negative aspects of code-switching are eliminated as they affect the learning of the intended variety in bilingual classrooms
- Although code-switching is inevitable in bilingual classrooms, it is suggested that it should only concur when it is necessary and critical to do so as it compromises the proficiency in languages involved in bilingual learning environments.

CONCLUSION

The conducted study has demonstrated that code-switching is a concept that is unavoidable in bilingual communities. The study revealed that code-switching impacts positively and negatively on languages that co-exist in bilingual communities such as Lower Gweru where IsiNdebele is the first language and dominant and ChiShona which is another indigenous variety in contact. A positive impact of code-switching pertains to borrowing, coining, and phonologising adoption of language aspects as evidenced by expressions and concepts reflected in the study. On the contrary, code-switching impacts negatively when linguistic words from one language overwhelm another language which leads to the decay of the overwhelmed variety. In this study, the dominant language is ChiShona while IsiNdebele is the first language and the main language in the Lower Gweru community where these two indigenous languages co-exist. Therefore, the study affirmed that code-switching impacts positively and negatively in bilingual and multilingual situations.

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